

G-004/AA-93-103 ORDER GRANTING VARIANCE

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Don Storm	Chair
Tom Burton	Commissioner
Cynthia A. Kitlinski	Commissioner
Dee Knaak	Commissioner
Norma McKanna	Commissioner

In the Matter of the Request of
Great Plains Natural Gas Company
for a Variance from Minn. Rules,
Part 7825.2820

ISSUE DATE: March 24, 1993

DOCKET NO. G-004/AA-93-103

ORDER GRANTING VARIANCE

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Minn. Rules, part 7825.2820 requires every Minnesota gas and electric utility to file an annual auditor's report as part of its yearly automatic adjustment filings.

On February 8, 1993, Great Plains Natural Gas Company (Great Plains or the Company) submitted a request for a variance from Minn. Rules, part 7825.2820. Great Plains explained that it had not been aware of this filing requirement, due to a misunderstanding of Commission rules. Great Plains was alerted to the requirement when the Department of Public Service (the Department) questioned the missing audit report. At that time, the Company's annual audit had just been completed. Great Plains explained that generating the auditor's report for the Commission at this point would be an expensive duplication of effort. The Company therefore requested exemption from the requirement for the 1991 reporting year only; future annual auditor's reports would be duly and timely filed.

On July 26, 1992, the Department submitted a report to the Commission in which it recommended granting the requested variance.

No party opposed the granting of the variance.

The matter came before the Commission on March 11, 1993, as part of the Commission's annual consideration of automatic adjustment reports under Minn. Rules, part 7825.2850.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Minn. Rules, part 7830.4400 states that the Commission will grant a variance to its rules if the following standards are met:

1. Enforcement of the rule would impose an excessive burden upon the applicant or others affected by the rule;
2. Granting of the variance would not adversely affect the public interest; and
3. Granting of the variance would not conflict with standards imposed by law.

In this case, Great Plains' request for a variance meets the rule criteria and a variance should be granted.

Requiring Great Plains to generate a second expensive audit report would unduly burden the Company and its ratepayers. Granting the variance would not adversely affect the public interest; the Department is satisfied that its reviews of the Company's rates, PGA, and gas costs in the 1991 Minnesota Gas Adjustment True-Up Report were satisfactory. Granting the variance would not conflict with standards imposed by law. The annual auditor's report is simply one method of providing ongoing review of Great Plains' rates and fuel costs; the review has been satisfactorily completed without the filing.

The Commission will grant Great Plains a variance from Minn. Rules, part 7825.2820 for the Company's 1991 filings. The Commission expects that all future automatic adjustment filings will be submitted by the Company in a prompt and complete fashion.

ORDER

1. Great Plains Natural Gas Company is granted a variance from Minn. Rules, part 7825.2820 for the Company's 1991 automatic adjustment filings.
2. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Richard R. Lancaster
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)